

NEW PROGRAM FOR HOME OWNERS

HOME IN NEED OF IMPROVEMENT? HRA LOANS CAN HELP

A new home rehabilitation loan is being offered through the Bloomington Housing and Redevelopment Authority's Community Enhancement Program (CEP) and Hennepin County to foster the continued renewal and preservation of residential neighborhoods in Bloomington.

This deferred rehabilitation loan, which does not have monthly payments, will be available to owners of single-family homes who live within the designated boundaries east of I-35W, west of Hwy. 77 and south of American Boulevard in Bloomington.

The maximum loan amount available is \$35,000. Income and home value limits apply. Eligible improvements

include, but are not limited to, siding, windows, reroofing, replacement of mechanical systems, decks, patios, three-season porches and garages.

Participants in the program will have their home rehabilitation loan deferred at 5 percent interest for the first 10 years. After 10 years, no additional interest will accrue. The loan is payable upon sale, transfer of ownership or when the home is otherwise no longer occupied by the applicant.

Applications will be accepted once the program is finalized in September 2011. For more information, visit the City's website. To have your name placed on a waiting list, contact HRA Program Specialist Brian



Duerwachter at 952-563-8939 or e-mail bduerwachter@ci.bloomington.mn.us.

WEBSITE KEYWORD: CEP II.

AWARD-WINNING SERVICES

BIG ACCOLADES ICE GARDEN RECEIVES JAMES PADGETT AWARD



Bloomington Ice Garden (BIG) was the recipient of the 2011 James Padgett Award. The award is given yearly to the Minnesota ice arena that distinguishes itself as a leader, innovator and contributor to the ice arena industry.

BIG Manager Andy Baltgalvis, pictured above with Mayor Gene Winstead and Director of Community Services Diann Kirby, is always looking for ways to improve operations and to protect the City's investment.

"This award is a nice recognition and it shows the City's commitment to improving and upgrading its facilities," Baltgalvis said.

TOP HONORS WINNING CITY COMMUNICATIONS



The City has a long history of excellent communications with the Community as evidenced by the nearly 70 awards that it has received since 1998 from local and national peers.

Bloomington was again recognized for excellence in communications when it received top honors at this year's Minnesota Association of Government Communicators' (MAGC) 2011 Northern Lights Contest.

The *Briefing*, *Insider*, *Corporate Report to the Community 2010* and the *All About Water* video all received MAGC's highest honor: the Award of Excellence. The *City Faces* video was presented with an Award of Merit. Additionally, the *Insider*, the City's employee newsletter, was nominated for the Best of Show award.

The MAGC Northern Lights Contest represents the best in government communications. For a complete listing of all Communications' awards, visit the City's website.

WEBSITE KEYWORD: AWARDS.

In the loop

RADISSON BLU CONSTRUCTION BEGINS HOTEL TO OPEN MARCH 2013



May groundbreaking kicked off construction of a 500-room Radisson Blu hotel at Mall of America (MOA) – the first hotel to be connected to MOA via skyway.

The City and Port Authority worked with Hennepin County, MOA, Minnetonka-based Carlson Hotels and Minneapolis-based Mortenson Construction on the \$137 million hotel project. The project is funded through \$40.2 million in Bloomington Port Authority-issued tax-exempt bonds, \$40 million in private loans, \$14.5 million in Port Authority taxable parking ramp bonds, \$42 million in private equity from Carlson and Mortenson, and \$800,000 from MOA. Revenue from the hotel will be used to repay the debt on the hotel itself, with existing tax increments repaying parking ramp bonds. The City, Port Authority and taxpayers are not liable for repayment of the bonds.

The hotel will be situated on the south side of MOA, between Macy's and Bloomingdale's. It is estimated that the project will create 250 full-time construction jobs and 240 permanent hotel jobs. Radisson Blu is scheduled to open in March 2013.

WEBSITE KEYWORDS: RADISSON BLU.

WHAT'S DEVELOPING? MOA INSTALLING HIGH EFFICIENCY PARKING LOT LIGHTS



Mall of America (MOA) is in the process of replacing all 5,400 parking ramp lights with new, light-emitting diode (LED) fixtures.

The project begins in September and will result in significant energy savings at MOA, making it a "best practices" example of the South Loop District's sustainability goals.

The lighting replacement, believed to be the largest efficiency conversion project of its kind in the United States, will trim the parking ramps' energy costs by two-thirds. The energy saved over the 20-year life of the fixture is enough to run Nickelodeon Universe for six years or power more than 11,000 homes for a year. For more information on how LEDs work and why they are efficient light sources, visit www.electronics.howstuffworks.com/led3.htm. The LED fixtures will also result in better lighting performance in cold weather and reduce light pollution. In other words, an observer outside the parking ramp will not see as much light coming from the side of the parking ramps. The yellowish glare of the high pressure sodium fixtures will now be replaced by a softer, white glow.

This efficiency improvement is an example of the public-private implementation the City wants to encourage by emphasizing sustainability in the *South Loop District Plan*. Accomplishing this lighting improvement required the cooperative involvement of MOA, the lighting fixture manufacturer, Xcel Energy, state and federal agencies, and the City of Bloomington.

The lighting replacement project will cost approximately \$3 million, aided by a \$500,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Energy and the Minnesota Department of Commerce through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act and \$500,000 energy conservation rebate from Xcel Energy. MOA will borrow the balance from the City and repay the loan and interest with five years of special assessments."

The installation will be undertaken by Acuity Brands Lighting, one of the world's largest providers of outdoor luminaires and lighting controls. The project is scheduled to be completed by late fall this year.

Since opening, MOA has made several investments to save energy and recycle its waste. MOA recycles around 60 percent of its total waste.

For more information, contact City Planner Londell Pease at 952-563-8926 or lpease@ci.bloomington.mn.us.